

Louisiana Pharmacists Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Louisiana Pharmacists Association Educates Patients about Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Louisiana's unpredictable weather can sometimes have the residents in shorts for the winter season. Lately, the weather has brought chilly nights, and many homes are turning on their furnaces and heaters for warmth. Carbon monoxide poisoning can potentially become a problem for homeowners who have carbon monoxide emitting products such as furnaces, gas stoves, hot water heaters, and portable kerosene heaters. It is crucial to understand what carbon monoxide poisoning is, how it can affect you, and how to prevent the poisoning in your home.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas that escapes from fuel burning appliances and becomes trapped in enclosed spaces. It is a by-product that comes from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuel and can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled. Carbon monoxide poisoning is the leading cause of poison related deaths in the United States. It is responsible for 450 deaths and 20,000 nonfatal injuries every year. Most carbon monoxide poisonings occur unintentionally in residential homes, and the poisonings are most likely to happen during fall and winter months. This is when the use of home heating systems increases, and almost half of the residents are asleep at the time of poisoning.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, installing a battery operated carbon monoxide detector in the home is the most effective step for protecting a family from poisoning. These detectors serve as a warning device to detect emissions of carbon monoxide and can notify residents before dangerous levels are reached.

Another strategy to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning is effective consumer education after they purchase their carbon monoxide emitting product. Different manufactures provide information on the warnings and risks in their product manuals. Gas and oil utility companies recommend having gas and oil burning appliances regularly inspected by a trained professional. Also, portable generator manufactures

should provide safety information with the purchase of their product. Generators should be placed more than 20 feet away from the home to effectively keep carbon monoxide out of your home.

What you can't see, smell, or hear can potentially harm you or your family during winter months. To protect yourself or your loved ones from poisonous carbon monoxide, install a battery operated carbon monoxide detector in your home. Always educate yourself on your carbon monoxide emitting products, and keep generators more than 20 feet from your home. Sharing these simple precautions can potentially save a life in your home or community.

Resources:

<https://d3grjrthjo55kz.cloudfront.net/Content/Toolkits/CarbonMonoxide/cdc-carbon-monoxide-poisoning-prevention-a-toolkit.pdf>

<https://www.nphic.org/toolkits/carbon-monoxide>

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The Louisiana Pharmacists Association, established in 1882, strives to promote the interests of all pharmacists of the State of Louisiana. For more information about the LPA and its benefits, contact Julie Fuselier or Phyllis Perron, LPA Co-Executive Directors at 225/346-6883 or visit our website at www.louisianapharmacists.com.

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